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expenditure of money or to prevent the creation of any unauthorized obligation; secondly, it would seem that a State Constitution should contain a few general limitations on the rights and powers of municipalities; that each city be permitted to frame its own charter, and to submit it to a popular vote; that after its approval by the people, it should be subject to the approval and acceptance of the Legislature for the protection of the general interests of the State; and that thereafter it should not be changed except by the vote of the people themselves. The Charter thus made and approved by the citizens, should contain only a few general regulations, a mere framework; all legislation necessary for the proper conduct of the municipality, being provided by ordinances passed by the General Council of the city. In other words, the Legislature of the State ought not to be permitted to regulate municipal affairs except so far as they concern matters of more general and State concern. Under such circumstances each city would have as good a Charter and as good a government as it deserved or as it really wanted. Its laws or ordinances would then be made by representatives chosen by its own voters and directly responsible to them alone. If good municipal government cannot be obtained in this way by universal suffrage and home-rule, then universal suffrage should be curtailed. The remedy for the abuses of municipal government is not to be obtained in the State Capitol but in the City Hall or at the city polls.

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#### VACATION COURSE OF THE VEREIN FÜR SOCIAL POLITIK.

The two weeks' vacation course in economics and social politics which was concluded in Berlin on the twelfth of October, apparently proved a success, in every respect. Strictly speaking, the undertaking was not an experiment; what has previously been done in this direction was pointed out by Professor Schmoller in the ANNALS for September, 1895. It will suffice to recall here that the courses of this year were, in part, intended to replace those planned by the Evangelical Social Congress and that the somewhat similar effort of this organization in 1893 can be regarded as the immediate forerunner of the present enterprise.

The *Verein für Social Politik*, would seem to be better fitted for the work than its predecessor. It is bound to no party, sect or program, but seeks merely to unite in common effort those who believe in the necessity of social reform and strive to promote its attainment.

while holding fast to the principles of the present organization of society. Hitherto the association has worked upon public opinion and participated in the movement for better legislation chiefly through the biennial meetings at which living problems were discussed on the basis of carefully collected material, and through a long series of scientific investigations and reports which have been prepared by its members and published under its imprint since 1873. Thus the vacation course is a new tool in the equipment of the association, by means of which it can extend its activities to wider fields, with which it may strive to broaden and deepen the general knowledge of facts essential to sound judgment upon social questions, and through which its representatives will be able to gain that more active and personal influence which usually accompanies the relation of lecturer to hearer and is almost inherent in it.

Who and what the hearers were, will best appear from an analysis of the list of those who attended the courses. Early in the first week 490 persons had been registered, 256 of these being residents of Berlin or its suburbs. In the second week, partly it is supposed because the three Berlin professors, Schmoller, Wagner and Sering were to lecture, and partly because the lectures of the preceding week had served to advertise the course, the attendance increased to 791 (a number not reached, to be sure, at all lectures), over two-thirds of the new visitors coming from Berlin or the immediate neighborhood. Of the 300 non-residents registered the greater number, were Germans, although there were enough foreigners, some fifty in all, many of them students of political science, to vary the Teutonic aspect of the audience. Among them were Russians, Austrians, Poles, Hungarians, Frenchmen, Italians, Danes, Armenians and Americans, (twelve). Classifying according to calling, one finds 49 clergymen; lawyers (*juristen*) of various sorts, many of them state officials, or about to become such, 181, university students from various faculties, 113; teachers 25; merchants, 19; physicians, 18; journalists, 12; *rentiers*, 13; active military officers, 13; retired officers, 8; manufacturers and factory owners, 12; land, estate or house owners (*Gutsbesitzer*, etc.), 11. A still more detailed examination of the list reveals the names of a number of privy and governmental councillors, and of others from the higher official circles. The business world was represented by the general manager of the Krupp Works and the secretary of the Central Union of German Industrialists, as well as a number of secretaries to Chambers of Commerce; the army, by active and retired generals, colonels and majors; and the universities, by members from all grades of the corps of instruction. Among the 160 women attending, twenty odd were teachers,

four authors, a somewhat larger number students. The remainder came partly from professional families, the wives and daughters of the Berlin faculty being strongly represented. There were also present representatives of other circles of Berlin and provincial society, among them some known to be strongly in sympathy with Social Democracy, and others active in the general movement for opening more of the economic field to their fellow country women.

From this it will be seen that the hearers were predominantly from the higher classes—who, by reason of ability, wealth, office or birth, were in possession of social station and presumably of education and culture considerably above the average. The courses filled each week-day of the fortnight from nine in the morning till six at night, while seven evenings were devoted to discussions presided over by one or another of the lecturing professors. Attendance upon all these exercises, or even upon a part of the lectures, was conditioned upon an independent control of time and a power of temporarily laying aside the usual calling not generally exercised by the masses in industry and trade.

But the *Verein für Social Politik* had not intended to give a "popular" course. This was evident in the explicitly worded program as well as in the subjects chosen by the several professors and the method in which they were treated. The task here assumed was not the entertainment or enlightenment of active minds from the masses. Nor was it provision of that opportunity for improving general education or for help toward broader culture which University Extension offers in the United States and England, partly as substitute for, partly as complement to, the work of colleges. It was, to be sure, the task of diffusing among groups partly without the pale of the universities the results of scientific research and reflection, but only those of economic science and the purpose of the undertaking was the practical one of winning influential circles to the cause of reform—in the higher sense of the word, a political purpose. Hence the character of the audience was deemed a matter for congratulation as well as its number and the attention, industry and interest which the members exhibited. The number of clergymen, which was small compared to the hundreds who had listened to the courses of the Evangelical Social Congress two years before, was disappointing, the more so as the need for fuller and more exact economic knowledge among the clergy is only too evident. On the other hand, the large representation from the bureaucracy, especially of younger officials, was all the more welcome. Without the help, sooner or later, of the

bureaucracy, Germans seem to think it difficult to achieve anything of the nature of the reforms advocated by the Association for Social Politics. At all events, ends can be reached far more easily and quickly when the officials are for a measure rather than indifferent or opposed to it. Partly through such relations and influence as may be expected to result from this and succeeding vacation courses is it hoped to secure the adherence of the younger officials to the policy of social reform before they become too thoroughly imbued with the conservatism more or less characteristic of their calling.

Restricted as they were to six hours each, the lecturers adopted of necessity so condensed and concise a treatment that it is here impracticable to attempt, by further condensation, to report in detail upon the substance of their discourses. In the course of the fortnight nearly all the important economic questions attracting contemporary German thought were treated by specialists upon each subject. Agriculture and the great series of problems connected with it, the Labor Question and the Compulsory Insurance of Laborers against Sickness and Old Age, Industry, Money, Population, Colonies, Emigration, Commercial Policy, Taxation, Private Property and Economic Freedom, the History and Criticism of Socialism, the Division of Labor, Social Struggles and the Development of Social Classes—the bare recital of the themes sufficiently suggests the wealth and variety of material presented. So far as questions of method and tendencies incidentally arose, the views expressed were those of the ethical, realistic and inductive school of economic science, the majority of whose foremost German representatives were to be found among the lecturers. And wherever the nature of his subject permitted, the lecturer paved the way for his final propositions in the direction of reform by an historical introduction and a description of present conditions as complete and detailed as was possible within the limits of his time. As a series, therefore, the lectures constituted a general picture of German economic phenomena, of the processes of their origin, of the defects and the merits of present organization such as could be otherwise gained, by the foreigner, at least, only at the expense of long study and great pains. To Germans also, the series brought much that was new and valuable. For the trained economist it may have been merely the opportunity of listening to teachers not yet heard or of hearing the results of researches hitherto not published. For the practical man it was often the scientific co-ordination of facts known to him singly from his daily experience. For many others it was the first introduction to the realm of economic discussion. Whether and to what extent the ulterior purposes of the association have been advanced

are questions best left to the future, although here also the prospect for eventually favorable answers seems most flattering.

To what may this work ultimately lead? The result of this first and somewhat experimental effort having been so reassuring in point of attendance, it is highly probable that similar courses will be given later, both in Berlin and elsewhere, under the auspices of the association. Although nothing as yet seems definitely decided, it is not unlikely that lecture courses in economics and social politics will shortly be held in several of the larger cities. It has also been proposed, in some cases, to lessen the number of subjects discussed, to hold at least some of the courses in the evening so as to make them more accessible to the employed classes, and, lastly, to endeavor to attract artisans, clerks and laboring men by an adaptation of themes and treatment. One great hindrance, of course, to marked success among the laborers is their adherence to the Social Democratic party and their loyalty to the peculiar economic doctrines of the Social Democratic faith. As far as Berlin is concerned there is no apparent reason why the Evangelical Social Congress should discontinue the work it began in 1893. On the contrary, the Congress could very well hold courses in alternate years in Berlin, since the biennial meetings of the association render it inexpedient that courses should be held in the capital city under the latter's auspices oftener than once in two years. In the case of other university towns, the obvious procedure would be to leave the initiative, to the professor of economics, most actively interested in the work of the association in that locality. Upon him would fall, too, the task of arranging the courses and securing the services of such colleagues as might be willing to devote time and energy to the dissemination of economic knowledge and the advocacy of humane social policy. The sacrifices caused by such work are considerable, while the honorarium which the association is able to offer is hardly more than nominal. The scholars who lecture at Berlin have unmistakably evinced their earnestness and public spirit by willingly taking the trouble and giving the time which the preparation of the course and participation in it involved.

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